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Selections From TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN
December 1988

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Editors Express Apreciation to Readers

90A60056A Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 pp 1, 2

[Editorial: "Letter From the Editors"]

[Text] Dear Readers:

Although *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* Special Issue is not published widespreadly in large numbers, it has nevertheless reached readers in many places. Besides Ho Chi Minh City and the surrounding areas, it has also reached readers in the Mekong Delta, in the central region Hue, Hanoi, and a number of northern provinces. It's not that old resistance fighters have an imposing publishing system with expenditures running into the millions or an apparatus composed of thousands of employees. But even so, our special issues have still managed to reach readers in many places. It's difficult to say who has sought whom. Perhaps both sides have met by chance during a time of trouble when the country is falling behind and when renovation is urgent.

In some places, the copies of *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* are almost in tatters because they have changed hands so often. In some places, excerpts are read on the local radio station. In other places, articles are used as points of discussion among a number of people. Thus, it is like a good friend rather than stranger. We have received much encouragement and many suggestions from our readers. Many people have contributed articles, but these have not been ordinary commercial articles but rather a sharing of responsibility and feelings. It is difficult to describe the immense support from our readers. In this issue, we would like to print a number of articles for our readers. We are very moved by the fact that this special issue has reached overseas Vietnamese and that they have responded quickly by sending letters of encouragement and support.

This spontaneous encouragement from many places has led us to conclude that the decision to have a voice for veteran resistance fighters was a correct decision and that this is necessary in the present situation. This will contribute to stabilizing things and moving forward. It will not cause confusion or promote conservatism. Instead, it will accelerate the renovation process. This can only be good and beneficial.

TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN will do everything within its power to continue carrying out its responsibilities. Thank you.

The Foundation of Democratic and Open Renovation

90A60056B Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 89 pp 1, 2

[Excerpt from a speech by Nguyen Ho, the president of the Ho Chi Minh City Club of Resistance, on 19

December 1988 at a meeting held at the Municipal Lao Dong Cultural Center to commemorate three historical days—19 December, 20 December, and 22 December]

[Text] Comrades:

We are holding this meeting today to commemorate three glorious days in the nation's history—All-Vietnam Resistance Day on 19 December 1946, the founding of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam on 20 December 1960, and the founding of the Vietnam People's Army on 22 December 1944—with the aim of reviewing the heroic history of our nation and the valuable lessons on the long path of bloody combat trod by our people.

Comrades:

Under the leadership of our renowned Communist Party of Vietnam headed by our beloved President Ho, the people of Vietnam, who could no longer endure slavery or the cruel yoke of domination by the colonial imperialists, arose and launched a revolution with the Bac Son, Nam Ky, Do Luong, and Ba To uprisings, which led to the August 1945 revolution to seize power and the establishment the Democratic Republic of Vietnam, the first worker-peasant state in Southeast Asia. The people then waged a 30-year resistance against the French and American imperialists, scoring glorious victories at Dien Bien Phu in May 1954 and in the historical Ho Chi Minh City operation on 30 April 1975. All of southern Vietnam was liberated, the country was reunified, and the entire country entered a new revolutionary stage, the socialist stage. Not long after that, the people had to resist invaders from the southwest and north in order to defend the fatherland.

Throughout these past 48 years, the Vietnamese people have had to carry out a revolution and wage a war for national liberation, independence, and freedom to defend the fatherland and the fruits of the revolution and to build the country. They have had to make great sacrifices. Millions of people have been killed, and tens of millions of people must live with the terrible effects of war.

Comrades:

The historical Ho Chi Minh operation in the spring of 1975 (30 April) concluded the great resistance. This ended with the complete liberation of southern Vietnam and the reunification of the country. Our country then entered the new revolutionary stage, the stage of socialism.

Our people, who are enthusiastic and proud of this great victory, have eagerly contributed to building the country and building a happy life for themselves.

During the past 13 years, through their intelligence and creative labor, workers and laborers (including both intellectual and manual laborers) nationwide have scored achievements in the political, economic, social, cultural, educational, and national defense spheres. In

particular, the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress—the renovation resolution—and the resolutions of the Central Committee of the CPV [Communist Party of Vietnam] (6th Term) have generated great enthusiasm and hope among the people. Even though the cadres, party members, workers, and laborers have struggled to implement the resolutions and even though good results have been achieved in various places, the party's correct renovation resolution is still basically just a piece of paper. There have even been instances in which things have been done contrary to the resolution, which has produced serious consequences for the country and society.

For many consecutive years, erroneous tax, price, financial, and banking policies harmed the country's economy and lowered the standard of living of laborers and wage earners. This includes the price and wage policies, the policies on issuing 100, 200, 500, 1,000, 2,000, and 5,000 dong notes, and the policies on raising the price of commodities (food, consumer goods, transportation fees, gasoline prices, and materials and raw materials for production). Various types of taxes were raised (commodity taxes and import and export duties). Foreign currency remittances were taxed, there was a terrible shortage of cash, and inflation was very serious.

Comrades:

In the past, with 500,000 American troops, one million puppet troops, millions of tons of bombs, and hundreds of billions of dollars, the American imperialists thought that they could force Vietnam to surrender and make the Vietnamese people renounce the communist party. But in the end, the Vietnamese people defeated the American imperialists. People everywhere admired Vietnam.

During the past 13 years, although the American imperialists have not spent one dollar or stationed one soldier here, their after-the-war intention has been realized: Vietnam has not been able to advance toward socialism (prosperity, strength, and happiness). Vietnam is today one of the poorest and most backward countries in the world. The image and prestige of the party and of socialism among the people and throughout the world has been greatly tarnished. This is a disaster for the party and Vietnamese people.

The reason for this serious situation is that certain elements in the leadership organizations and state management organizations have dominated many of the country's operations, particularly in the economic field. They have always acted contrary to the party's resolutions. As a result, there has been a lack of resolve in leadership and state management. Many sectors, including the pricing, finance, banking, agriculture, industry, and food sectors, have acted arbitrarily, creating serious consequences for the country and society. There has been widespread famine and people have died of starvation. Commercial production has stagnated, and hundreds of billions of dong worth of goods are

stagnating in the warehouses. The number of unemployed people has increased. The wages of the cadres, workers, and civil servants have not increased in many years while the cost of living has increased daily.

But what is difficult to understand is that those who have committed mistakes and caused great damage for the country and society have not been disciplined or punished (fired or prosecuted). In many instances they have even been promoted or given more functions.

Thus, more than ever before, we see the real role, function, and power—the supreme power—of the National Assembly. As the constitution stipulates, it must be restored and reaffirmed. The National Assembly must be completely independent. It must not be subordinate to any agency or organization.

The National Assembly must examine and deal with things resolutely. Whoever has scored achievements must be praised and rewarded. Those who have committed mistakes or violated the law must be disciplined and prosecuted. Everyone is equal before the law.

During this session of the National Assembly (December 1988), we have submitted motions to the National Assembly proposing that the following people be dismissed and prosecuted:

1. Hoang Huy, the minister of finance.
2. Tran Tieu, the vice minister of finance.
3. Nguyen Cong Tan, the minister of agriculture and food processing.

We have proposed that the following be dismissed:

4. Lu Minh Chau, the director general of the State Bank.
5. Phan Van Tiem, the chairman of the State Price Commission.

As for the economic, political, and social effects discussed above, the five people named above are not the only ones responsible. The National Assembly must also examine the responsibility of the Council of State and the Council of Ministers.

Comrades:

The present situation in our country and society requires that we resolutely implement the resolution of the Sixth Congress and the resolutions of the Central Committee of the CPV (6th Term). That is the only way to bring our country and society out of the today's dangerous situation.

But the central element of renovation must be democratization and openness of all the country's activities in order to persuade millions of people to participate in renovation. This is a revolution, and revolution is the task of the masses.

Only if there is democracy and openness will it be possible to push back and even defeat conservatism, bureaucratic centralism, authoritarianism, and sluggishness, which pose major obstacles for our country in moving forward. Democratization and openness are the

strong foundation of renovation. Without democratization and openness there can be no renovation.

Comrades:

The fact that we have managed to defeat enemies much stronger than us shows that the Vietnamese people are a heroic, clever, creative, and diligent people of great forbearance. There is nothing that our people can't do. Thus, the question is, in the 13 years since liberation, why haven't we been able to build a happy life for ourselves? During the same period, four "dragons" have appeared in Southeast Asia. These four dragons, Thailand, South Korea, Taiwan, and Singapore, have managed to build a prosperous and happy society. The reason is that our leaders have made many mistakes, and these mistakes have prevented our country from advancing.

Because of this, our resistance fighters, most of whom are retired, must, in the years left them, participate actively in the renovation struggle and carry out resolutely the resolution of the Sixth Congress and the resolutions of the Central Committee of the CPV. Our work has not yet been completed; it is still only half finished. There is independence but no happiness, no freedom, no socialism. We must strive to match our words to actions and ensure that the party's resolutions are implemented fully and bring happiness to the people. The people's confidence in the party and in socialism must be restored.

Long live the spirit of heroic resistance of the Vietnamese people!

Long live the heroic people's army!

Long live the spirit of solidarity of the Vietnamese people who have waged a brilliant resistance!

President Ho will live forever in our work.

Everyone must resolutely implement the resolution of the Sixth Congress and the party's renovation resolutions.

The Powerful Voice of the People at the Fourth Session of the National Assembly (Fourth Term)
90A60056C Hanoi *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*
(Special Issue) in Vietnamese Dec 88 p 2

[Article by Phan Van Dang]

[Text] The recent debates and congresses of the mass organizations and Fatherland Front have reflected quite accurately the economic and social situation and pointed out why many things are moving in the wrong direction. The localities and commercial production units have written articles in the press stating quite clearly that the reason for this is that a number of the policies currently in effect are very strange. These policies have hampered commercial production. Commodities are scarce, prices have skyrocketed, and the lives of the laborers have become more and more difficult. These policies have

promoted negative aspects rather than encouraging creativity. They have produced poverty and backwardness instead of helping to make the country prosperous, strong, and civilized.

For this reason, I think that not only is this session of the National Assembly an appeal and demand but also the voice of the highest organization that will decide the fate of the country. These legitimate voices will force the state organizations to obey, because the state is by the people and of the people. Based on the renovation concept, under the socialist system, we can see that the Party leaders and the people hold the power.

What is quite clear is that a strong reaction on the part of the masses should not be unexpected, and this should not be taken to mean that the masses oppose socialism. They expressed great enthusiasm when they learned that the resolutions and policies of the party were in accord with the realities of life. But the specific policies have prevented the party's correct resolutions from benefiting the people and the country.

For a long time, people have wondered why this situation has been allowed to drag on for so long. The leaders have not given a reasonable explanation. Perhaps the leaders are aware of this situation, but when they attempt to explain things, they stop halfway.

Because of this, to date "each one is marching to a different drummer." As a result of this lack of mutual cooperation, the revolution has actually moved backwards and shackled and isolated itself. Furthermore, it has been impossible to restore the prestige of the party or regain the trust of the masses. As public opinion has pointed out, a "house leaks from the roof." Although this is a common saying, it contains a profound truth.

Those policies that are not in accord with reality and that are contrary to the wishes of the people have caused a chain reaction in social life. These policies have not considered the true value of the interests and separated the economy from society. They have destroyed the relationship between the classes and the economic elements during the initial stage of the transitional period. These policies are far removed from the spirit of the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress. Based on this reality, we are imbued with the teaching of President Ho, who said that "only if the masses recognize the correct policies and leadership abilities of the party will the party be able to maintain its leading position."

Correct party leadership always stems from the legitimate aspirations of the masses and is based on the trust of the masses. But the mass viewpoint and mass line of the party have faded, and a number of leading cadres have made mistakes.

Recently, life has punished us for this, and if we continue on this path, even worse punishment is in store. This is because the patience of the masses is wearing thin. The commercial production organizations are encountering

serious problems and difficulties and very little has been done to solve these problems.

In view of the above situation, I hope that the leading cadres will remember Lenin's warning: "False boasting is the death of morality and the precondition for political death." Even though this warning was made a long time ago, it still has great meaning for us today.

In order to have real reform, we cannot accept half-way reform. Because if we do, this will be tantamount to allowing people to carry on erroneous and unlawful economic and political activities, which will hinder the implementation of democracy and renovation.

There is hope for the future, because there are opportunities and many favorable conditions. But conservatism and bureaucratic centralism are blocking the advance of the revolution. Because of this, an attitude of heroic struggle is a manifestation of the role and responsibility of each person and each organization. This is not "an invitation to chaos" as some conservatives and bureaucrats want to accuse.

Life requires that we pay the price in order to advance. In order to advance, as Lenin said, "we must smash through every obstacle and break the bonds that bind us." Thus, I hope that this session of the National Assembly will use its authority to expel those who are hindering progress and break the bonds of conservatism and bureaucratic centralism in order to carry on real social democratization and renovation.

Of course, a single session cannot solve all the problems. But this session of the National Assembly cannot sidestep the urgent problems in daily life.

Renovation during the session of the National Assembly must not only improve the form of the meetings but must also maintain quality and ensure the results of the contents. This session must manifest initiative in line with the role of the National Assembly. The National Assembly must not remain passive as in the past.

Dare to speak the truth is the command of intelligence and conscience. It is also the command that the people of the country have given to the National Assembly.

Discussion About the Historical Significance of the Resistance

90A60056D Hanoi TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese Dec 88 p 3

[Article by Tran Van Giau]

[Excerpt] [Passage omitted] The year 1975 was the pinnacle in the 4,000 years of Vietnamese history. This victorious 30-year war was the greatest war of liberation in a succession of wars of liberation fought by our people. We are very happy and proud. We are proud but not boastful. Boastfulness added to a lack of understanding leads to decline. We are excellent in waging people's war, but our understanding of economic and

social development is very weak. The problem today is to ask ourselves how our country, which is now independent and unified, could have dropped from its glorious high point to such a low point. Is it that we spent all our energy during the 30 years of revolution and resistance? No! Were all of our young men of talent sacrificed during the 30 years of resistance? Again the answer is no! Just the opposite is true. The flame is still red and the steel is stronger. The greater the problems facing Vietnam, the more heroic the Vietnamese people will fight and labor. Why? We have encountered deviations and mistakes. We had to deal with deviations and mistakes during the 30 years of war, too. The problem is not that we have encountered problems but that the problems have continued for so long in places difficult for us to reach. We must carry on renovation promptly and realize that "renovation" is a real revolution, too. During the two wars of resistance, we always said that "time is on our side." We were correct in saying that. But now, that is no longer true. Vietnam must "take off" quickly and firmly. Surely the Vietnamese people, who scored victory at Dien Bien Phu and carried out the Ho Chi Minh operation, can catch up with the rest of the world in the final decade of the 20th Century and the beginning of the third millennium.

A Pressing Requirement: Renovate Civil Affairs

90A60056E Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese Dec 88 p 3

[Article by Duong Van Dieu]

[Text] In its 10 October 1988 issue, NHAN DAN wrote that "in Hanoi today, no one has a higher income or more comfortable life, makes use of the various means of entertainment, or enjoys the cultural and spiritual values more than the traders, smugglers, and a number of cadres who make use of their position." In another section, it said that the "worker and civil servant movement is gradually generating a revolutionary situation in which people want to change the present situation and find a new path."

This evaluation of the social and political situation should be given attention at the colleges in the capital. Did the author of the NHAN DAN article really want to admit a political crisis?

As for the situation in southern Vietnam, for many months now, each day, tens and hundreds of peasants and fishermen from the Mekong Delta to Thuan Hai have come to the city in "tattered clothes and bare feet" to meet with officials to make complaints and demand rights. Concerned about the situation, people are asking themselves if the above phenomena are concealing something inside. Are these things a portend of things to come?

What is clear is that the socioeconomic situation continues to seriously deteriorate. There has been an all-round decline. Negative social phenomena show no sign

of declining even though the press, the sectors, and other circles have all responded to the "things that need to be done." The central echelon has issued several resolutions, but the "four reductions" have turned into the "four increases." Production in the city is stagnating. There are many complaints about taxes. People say that taxes have killed production instead of stimulating it. We are dissatisfied with all aspects of Culture, education, security, social order, and morality. The people are uneasy. Elder cadres are greatly concerned. The municipal confederation of unions was debating whether it should stop issuing more decisions in order not to prolong the poor destiny of the unions.

Are the leadership echelons aware of this? I am sure they are, at least to some degree. But people are still worried. Why has the rate of decline not been slowed anywhere even though everyone acknowledges that the resolutions are correct? The causes of this terrible situation were discussed openly at the Sixth Congress but now, two years later, little has been done about this.

In my view, the fifth resolution basically solved the problem of party building. But it did not directly address today's burning problems: renovating civil affairs, eliminating the obstacles and conservative elements, and eliminating sluggishness and special privileges. These things are obstructing the implementation of the party's correct policies aimed at solving the country's problems. In terms of the per capita standard of living, out of 203 countries, we rank 201st. Unless something is done about this situation, we will become the poorest country in the world. Throughout the world, people view poverty as a disgrace, just like losing the country, because this threatens the people and degrades human dignity. Time compels us. The economic, social, and political situation and the fatherland's future demand that we renovate organization and renovate the cadres immediately. Immediate steps must be taken to put a stop to the situation in which incompetent and immoral elements control the sectors and elements.

During the past few days, there have been high-level civil affairs changes in the Soviet Union, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria. Don't think that they view lightly comradeship and the achievements of the cadres who have "left." The reason for this is that they place the interests of the fatherland above everything else.

I would like to make two suggestions:

1. Don't do away with the party's National Conference of Cadres as planned. Resolute action should be taken to hold this conference. This should not be compared with an expanded plenum of the central committee. This is the only way for the national conference to have sufficient prestige and wisdom and the strength needed to solve the cadre problem, which is a burning problem, and begin "operating" on the party. Even though this will be very painful, the country will eventually come out of the crisis, and the Vietnamese ship will pass through the storm unharmed.

2. Ideas must be obtained from throughout the party on high-level civil affairs. The higher echelons represent the

entire party and are responsible to the entire party. They must be examined and evaluated by the entire party based on a spirit of criticism and self-criticism.

I think that the entire party will be clear-sighted, and this action will restore confidence throughout the party and among all the people.

Letter From Hanoi

90A60056F Hanoi *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*
(Special Issue) in Vietnamese Dec 88 p 4

[Letter by Le Giang]

[Text] To Mr Tra:

I have read the special issues of the Ho Chi Minh City Club of Resistance and the recent issue of *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*. You have the conditions and means that we in Hanoi do not have but would like very much to have in the present situation. I hope that you will continue to publish special issues and eventually reach the point where you will be able to publish on a regular basis. I have given copies to many people here. Everyone is happy that there is a voice of former cadres worthy of the trust of the people of Saigon.

I received your letter several days ago. Your enthusiasm and that of the others in Ho Chi Minh City has inspired me. During my visit to Ho Chi Minh City, I had a chance to evaluate the situation following the Sixth Congress. Today, as I write these lines, the atmosphere of the Trade Union Congress is heated; the just concluded Front Congress and I feel the same. In my view, this is another worthy contribution that will facilitate the change of course in the revolution that began with the Sixth Congress. It's true that since the Sixth Congress, the material lives of the cadres and people have not improved. But even though the wind of democracy and openness is not as strong as we had hoped it would be, this is still a spiritual factor. And it can be said that this will prevent the anti-renovation forces from prevailing.

The people are demanding clear socio-economic renovation. But socio-economic renovation can be carried on only in conditions in which there has been social, political, and organizational renovation. And this must be a very firm step. These conditions were present during the Sixth Congress. But to date, resolute action has not been taken. As a result, 2 years since that revolutionary turning point, we are still at the starting gate. The vanguard forces in the party press on in order to deepen and broaden democracy. As for the peasant movement in Nam Bo, the results of the recent Trade Union Congress and the results of the Front Congress have promoted the work of renovation, which we must prize.

I am sure that you agree that the important thing is for us to determine the truth about the country's actual situation today in order to have a basis for determining our contributions and implementing the resolution of the Sixth Congress.

After returning to Hanoi from Ho Chi Minh City, I told a number of people here about the activities of the Club of Resistance in Saigon. The dynamism and initiative exhibited by the people there is a good example for those of us in Hanoi. You well know that the feudal legacy in the North, including Hanoi, is still very strong. I hope that the copies of your special issue in circulation in Hanoi contribute to democratization in Hanoi. I hope that you can set aside one page for us. Can you allow us a "Page From Hanoi?" I am thinking about proposing that you consider expanding the Ho Chi Minh City Club of Resistance to include veterans from Hanoi and Hue, with the club's headquarters in Ho Chi Minh City.

I am very interested in the fact that you are stressing the need to protect the party and the revolution. In the future, if the country encounters large numbers of problems and faces dangers, perhaps our older and experienced communists and former resistance fighters will have to take the initiative and form a union to defend the revolution throughout the country. I think that given the situation today, even though these problems have not arisen yet, we must heighten vigilance and move in that direction.

The victories of the Trade Union and Front congresses are victories of congresses backed by the masses. We are happy to record these two events.

I wish all of you good health.

Never Forget the Date 20 December 1960, the Date of the Founding of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam

90A60056G Hanoi *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese Dec 88 p 5

[Article by Huynh Van Tieng]

[Text] One historical truth is that every victory of the revolution stems from three basic factors:

The leadership of the party.
The worker-peasant alliance.
The unified National Front.

Based on the worker-peasant alliance, the party built a grand and strong structure, that is, a unified National Front that was strong enough to meet the challenges of every storm until final victory was won on 30 April 1975 and the entire country was liberated and unified. After 1930, the Democratic Front, the Viet Minh Front, the Vietnam National United Front, and the Fatherland Front were the entities that marked the violent stages of the Vietnamese revolution. During the very fierce resistance against America, the leader of the imperialists, the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam manifested its ability to attract people of all classes to the sacred struggle for freedom, independence, and socialism. Like Ngo Dinh Diem before him, Nguyen Van Thieu, the president of the puppet regime, frequently cursed the "fence-sitters who ate the nation's rice while helping the Viet Cong." Everyone knows that that was an acknowledgment of their defeat and their inability to attract

the true representatives of the intelligentsia, national bourgeois, progressive people, and patriotic Catholics and Buddhists to their side. Even after the invasion by the imperialists, a number of well-known people such as Luu Van Lang, the director general of the Tien Dong Duong School, Michel Van Vi, the director general of the French-Chinese Bank, Trinh Dinh Thao, a lawyer, and Le Van Huan, an instructor, whose pasts were tied more closely to the French and Americans than to the revolution, remained loyal and acted in accord with the saying: do not cooperate with the imperialists. They kept up their courage and resolutely refused to "cooperate." They resisted the seductions and pressures of the Americans and their puppets. In 1960, they "got off the fence" and left for the battlefield to join the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, the president of which was Nguyen Huu Tho, and the Provisional Revolutionary Government, the president of which was Huynh Tan Phat. They abandoned everything, including their families and all their property.

This was a bright spot in the party's able leadership of the revolution that contributed to our brilliant victory in the resistance against America for national salvation.

Given the specific conditions of the revolution in Vietnam, a colony under the control of the feudal imperialists, the "Front" was not a local tactic or temporary stratagem but a long-term revolutionary strategy aimed at isolating and weakening the enemy and expanding and strengthening the revolutionary forces in the country and throughout the world, even in the United States. The Front strategy made it possible to mobilize and use the strengths and talents of all the people to defeat the enemy forces.

During the glorious days of liberating the south, the Front reflected the solidarity of all the people. It was a brilliant "painting," a beautiful "symphony," and solid "building" of national solidarity and brotherhood. It was the pride of the every Vietnamese.

But the question that arises is, why has the organization of the Front and the work of the Front declined so seriously during the past 13 years? People have forgotten the date 20 December 1960. Those intellectuals and national bourgeois who gave their lives for the sake of fatherland and revolution are now usually ignored even though they do receive compensation. Their only desire is to continue to serve the people in accord with their capabilities. They only hope that the party will repose confidence in them and give them suitable tasks. They feel abandoned. If this is the state of mind of revolutionary intellectuals, then the mood of the masses of intellectuals, commercial bourgeois, religious people, and people of Chinese ancestry "on the spot" must be even blacker. Issuing "city badges" in order to improve the morale of city dwellers, who are often viewed as "puppet people," has achieved very little. Thus, they feel like Tu Hai in the story Kim Van Kieu:

"If I surrender to the imperial court, as a submissive and bewildered rebel sitting among strangers, what will become of my fate?"

They complain that:

Today, it's difficult to live and shameful to be "evaluated."

The future is uncertain, because their children are blocked and find it difficult to get into a college.

The situation is dark. Because of the terrible policy of moving graves, parents cannot rest in peace even in the grave.

At meetings, even though they don't deny the achievements of the Front, the words of many representatives of the Fatherland Front are very bitter.

The Front is just the "lackey" of the regime.

The Front's purpose is just to take the brunt of the complaints made by the people.

Members of the Front complain uselessly as a signal to the people to prepare the preconditions for making contributions, and so on and so on.

Regardless of how correct such complaints are, this is a reflection of the loyalty of the many cadres who carry on Front activities. Attention must be given to this.

We admit that in the past period, many correct ideas concerning the position, role, and function of the Front have appeared in the press. These ideas have also been expressed at various meetings and at the Municipal Fatherland Front Congress and the Central Fatherland Front Congress. The Fatherland Front has made good changes, as manifested by the activities carried on in the civil affairs sector and by the expansion of political and economic debates. Those are good signs, but we cannot stop there.

We think that: 1. The work of building up the Front elements of the various echelons should be carried on in a democratic manner. We should avoid using pressure or force, which is what a number of people think should be done.

2. The powers and functions of the Front should be stipulated by specific laws and regulations. These should stipulate the relationship between the Front and the regime, the National Assembly, and the people's councils.

The Front does not belong to the party. It belongs to all the people. In this, the party is just one element. Using the slogan "use the people as the source," the Front must be renovated. In the present situation, I am afraid that when the roots are all rotten, the tree will fall.

Discussion on Democracy and Openness

90A60056H Hanoi *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*
(Special Issue) in Vietnamese Dec 88 p 6

[Article by Nguyen The Hung, a retired cadre who carried on activities prior to the August 1945 Revolution and who now lives in the G.D. Service Collective Zone in Dong Thap]

[Text] Recently, there has been much talk about implementing democracy and openness. I think that it is better not to say anything at all if we are just going to talk instead of taking action. Because unless we actually take action along with talking, the people will only ridicule us even more.

We have much proof that talking without acting allows the enemy to say: "Don't listen to what the communists say; watch what they do."

Our party is for the country and people. They should be informed about everything. They should discuss, carry out, and inspect things, which is another way of saying that things should be democratic and open. That is clear and straightforward. Why should the party have to conceal anything or do things secretly?

But to date, in carrying out tasks on behalf of the country and people, in many cases only a number of party members have known what was happening. The majority of the cadres and party members have not known what to tell the people. And so how can we talk about democracy and openness? Specifically, at the Fifth Party Congress, the party removed Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap from the Politburo. He was also removed from his position as minister of defense and replaced by Senior Gen Van Tien Dung, the right man in the right spot. That was done openly. That influenced the thinking and feelings of the entire party, the entire military, and all the people. But the reason for this change was never explained. Thus, there were questions within the party and among the people, with different people having different ideas about the reasons for this. Some people posed questions and then answered their own questions:

1. Did Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap leave the Politburo and his position as minister of defense because President Ho had wrongly chosen Senior him? No! During the 30 years that Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap led the military, he was always the "right man in the right spot" for President Ho. He was worthy of the trust of the entire party, all the people, and the entire military. He made great contributions during the 30-year war to save the country. He waged war against two imperialist powers, the French and the Americans, and brought fame to our Vietnamese fatherland.

2. Did Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap make serious mistakes? Did the leader of the army have to be replaced in order to ensure that the army could complete its mission as the army loyal to the country, the party, and the people and in order to ensure that it could complete every task, overcome every difficulty, and defeat any enemy? No! If Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap had committed a serious mistake, he should not have been permitted to remain in the CPV Central Committee or continue to hold the rank of senior general or remain in his position as vice president of the Council of Ministers. The love and respect of the military for Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap were manifested at the All-Military Party Congress (Fifth Party Congress), where he received the

largest number of votes cast. Not long after that, in the military there was a clamor for the "return" of Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap.

3. The man who replaced Senior Gen Vo Nguyen Giap on the Politburo and as minister of defense, that is, Senior Gen Van Tien Dung, remained for only a short time. During the Sixth Party Congress he was replaced by Senior Gen Le Duc Anh. Why?

There was no answer.

None of these events was ever explained. The Central Committee of the CPV did not practice democracy and openness in dealing with these matters. The entire party and army and all the people knew about these things but did not receive an explanation. Were there "secrets" that had to be concealed?

Another question is, Did the party bring up the matter of democracy and openness to have just subordinate echelons practice democracy and openness, with the Central Committee of the CPV not required to do so? Or was this meant to apply just to unimportant matters?

Did the provincial, municipal, district, city, local, and village party congress change leaders because the Central Committee acted "secretly" and did not do things openly? Are these activities internal matters of the party that do not need to be disclosed publicly?

The party wields power. Party leaders, from the Central Committee to the bases, must be open with the people. They have a direct influence on the lives of all the people. But the people can only listen and obey. This is not democracy and openness!

Let's turn from the party to the National Assembly and to the people's committees and authorities at various echelons. Each time that there is a change of leaders in the National Assembly, the people's committees, or the various-echelon administrative organizations, this is done openly and the reasons are given.

In order to ensure that democracy and openness are practiced, I think that the Central Committee of the CPV must set an example. The party exists only to serve the country and the people. Everything that it does it does for the country and people. Everything that it does can be disclosed to the entire party and all the people. The party trusts the people, and the people trust the party. But if such doubts and suspicions are not removed, this will just create more doubts and people will lose confidence in the leadership and guidance of the party.

Today, within the party and among the people, questions left over since the Fifth Party Congress remain unanswered. In order to practice democracy and openness, I think that the party must explain things. Better late than never. This will prove that the issue of democracy and openness is not just an empty slogan.

At the 19th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, not only was the

issue of democracy and openness brought to the attention of the Soviet people, but it was also discussed on television for the entire world to see. That was clear and straightforward. No one could criticize that. I think that in Vietnam, the various echelon party congresses and the coming Seventh Party Congress should do things openly like the 19th Plenum of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. That is true "renovation." That is real democracy and openness. Only by doing this will the "people trust the party."

Dead End, Way Out

906A00561 Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 7

[Article by Hoang Tu]

[Text] Veteran resistance fighters in general and communists in particular have shared a common dream and ideal and the same target of struggle: to win national independence, reunify the country, and advance to socialism. It can also be affirmed that the people in general shared this same dream. This is easy to understand, because our people have experienced terrible hardships. There were oppressed and exploited under the semi-feudal colonial system. It would be better to die than to be slaves again. Thus, they were ready to bear anything and sacrifice everything, including their property and lives, in order to ensure that the August Revolution won a glorious victory. In the two great wars of resistance, they won victories that reverberated around the world. The world was astonished and showed great admiration and sympathy for us. It can be affirmed that President Ho Chi Minh and the Communist Party of Vietnam exhibited brilliant leadership.

What was the people's understanding of socialism that made them struggle like that? It was very simple. It meant a society in which people could live happily with freedom and equality without oppression or exploitation. Both the educated and the uneducated throughout the country spread this idea. Socialism became the aspiration and ideal of all the people. But while that ideal was entirely correct, it has not yet been fully manifested as we all know under the light of "reorganization." A new socialist revolution is being carried on in the Soviet Union and many other socialist countries, including Vietnam. Here, this is called "renovation." This is being carried on based on our successes as well as our defeats and the mistakes made in building socialism. There has been a return to the purity of Marxism-Leninism.

On 30 April 1975, all of southern Vietnam was liberated. The entire country was filled with joy. Everyone's dreams seemed to be coming true. There was an opportunity to fulfill the hopes and realize the socialist ideals of the people even though we were just on the threshold of the transitional period. People were drunk with victory. The objective socio-economic laws were replaced by individual will power. That was one aspect. The other

aspect was that people rushed to make private profits and consolidate power. This led to today's state of affairs, as everyone knows.

Was the true intention to encourage frank and straightforward speech? If it was, then we are now in a major political, economic, social, and cultural crisis without any rules. People are living a debauched life. They have lost confidence. It is every person for himself. Irresponsible opportunists who hold positions of power have enriched themselves. Former resistance fighters, who remain loyal, are very concerned about this situation. Ordinary people complain that there is no way out of this dead end. They are uncertain and exhausted.

Is anyone to blame for this? If anyone is to blame, it is us, communists and former resistance fighters. Because we were the ones who raised our hands in a show of "unanimity." We tried to build a new and ideal society. We lacked experience and so we studied and imitated the fraternal socialist countries, mainly the Soviet Union and China. When they made mistakes, we made the same mistakes. That is an objective aspect, and there is nothing surprising about that. Subjectively, we had many weaknesses of our own. And to be frank, we were ignorant about many things. In the final analysis, this ignorance stemmed from our special circumstances. There is nothing to be ashamed about. The important thing today is that we must wake up and carry on renovation. We must be brave. Renovation can succeed only if we carefully analyze both the achievements and the shortcomings and mistakes of the past in order to learn useful lessons. At the same time, we must get rid of dogmatic and bookish ideas and become directly involved in life in order to formulate useful policies and measures. We must not be afraid to "re-examine" things. And it should be remembered that Marxist theory only sets guidelines. Lenin once said that "At 70, not even Marx could embrace the fundamental aspects of the objective logic of these changes." There must be creativity. Ever since the Sixth Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam, there have been many efforts to "renovate" the economy. For example, in agriculture, contract, tax, and bidding forms have been used in order to solve the food problem, the number 1 problem today. The peasants have shown greater enthusiasm, because they have received at least 20 percent, with many receiving about 40 percent. But I think that we have gone only half-way. There are still many fetters. We have not really created the conditions to liberate all the agricultural production forces. Renovation must be carried out more thoroughly.

According to Lenin, there are only two ways to carry on capitalist agricultural development, either according to the "Pho" method or the American method. The "Pho" method leads to landlords controlling the country, that is, a "military dictatorship under the guise of a parliamentary system." The American method requires the "abolition of the landlords. The peasants will become the owners of farms. The sovereignty of the people and bourgeois democracy."

Based on our country's land law, the "land belongs to all the people and is managed by the state." [Footnote 1] [In Das Capital, in the section on rents, Marx clearly distinguished the various rights, such as property rights, right of possession, right of disposition, right of use, and right of property ownership.] Thus, to develop socialist agriculture, we can do the following:

1. The state can lease land to the peasants for a period of 99 years. At the end of the period, another contract can be signed. In fact, the farmers will be tenant farmers of the state. (In the Soviet Union and China, the state gives 50-year leases. In the 16th Century, the normal lease was 99 years—Carl Marx, Das Capital.) Thus, the peasants will carry out all their rights. They will be close to the land and know how to produce many commodity products. Of course, as tenant farmers, they will not have the right to mortgage, sell, or exchange the land.
2. Allowing all the peasants to lease land means dividing the land among the peasants, with the state just setting taxes. The land must be divided in a fair and rational manner. This must be discussed democratically with the peasants at the peasant meetings. Representatives of the state can be present, but they must not interfere.
3. The state can collect the taxes in kind. The state will collect a certain percentage of the total product, and the peasants will get a certain percentage (that is, the amount remaining after the tax has been paid). They will have to pay all the production expenses themselves. The amount of tax will be calculated by technical agencies for each "type of farm." The amounts will be uniform throughout the country. Except for the taxes that must be paid to the state, the peasants will be able to use their products as they see fit (right of disposition). They will not have to contribute anything else under any other form. If the state wants to purchase additional amounts from the peasants, it must do so using trade means.
4. As for agricultural production cooperatives, any cooperative that can maintain effective production, meaning that the incomes of the cooperative members are higher than if they had engaged in individual farming activities, should be maintained, solidified, and expanded. Those cooperatives that cannot do this should be disbanded.
5. The peasants should establish service cooperatives by contributing capital (purchase shares either in cash or in materials converted to cash). If necessary, they can borrow from private individuals or from the banks. These service cooperatives will belong to the peasants. No other power has the right to interfere. The state can only inspect things and tax revenues according to the accounting records uniformly managed by the state. The main task of the service cooperatives is to do the plowing and harrowing, transplanting, irrigating, fertilizing, and harvesting for a fee. They can also buy and sell on behalf of the peasants and state for a fee. If the state performs the services for the peasants, for example, if it builds water conservancy projects, the peasants must pay a fee to the state. The trading relationships between the state

and the peasants must be on a commercial basis, such as selling fertilizer, insecticide, and all types of implements, from rudimentary tools to small and large machines.

If things are done like this, the relationship between the state and the peasants will be straightforward and equitable, the ownership rights of the peasants will be respected, the worker-peasant alliance will have meaning and be solidified, and there will be an abundance of grain and commodity products. And once the food problem has been solved, this will have a positive influence on the growth of industry and commerce, life will improve, confidence will be restored, and the prestige of the party will rise.

Is the land policy presented above contrary to Marxism-Leninism? Definitely not! This makes use of Lenin's New Economic Policy (NEP). This makes use of Lenin's state capitalism.

The goal of agricultural collectivization is large-scale production. But this requires certain conditions and takes time, even an historical period. The Soviet Union has been building socialism for 71 years. Agriculture there is highly collectivized, but now it has had to implement contract-lease policies, that is, tenant farming. This requires that we think clearly and intelligently.

According to Bukharin, socialist construction must proceed at a "snail's pace," that is, slowly but surely. In 1925, Bukharin put forward a slogan that became famous: "Continue to grow rich and expand your operations and don't worry about being seized by the throat." Unfortunately, people opposed the NEP beginning in 1928 and killed Bukharin.

Activities of the Municipal Club of Resistance

90A60056J Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 8

[Text] The Ho Chi Minh City Club of Resistance is composed of ward, district, and block resistance clubs (that is, committees, sectors, and circles formed during the period of resistance against France and America). The block resistance clubs that have been formed include the arms and security blocks, the troop proselytizing block, the military circle block, the workers and women proselytizing blocks, the front, the intellectuals proselytizing block (including the education sector, the national language propagation sector, the Democrat Party, and industrial and trade sectors, the science and technology sector, the motion picture industry, and so on), the Office of the Municipal CPV Committee, and the Office of Political Prisoners.

The wards, precincts, and districts that have formed resistance clubs include: Precinct 1, Precinct 4, Phu Nhuan Ward, Go Vap Ward, Tan Binh Ward, Precinct 11, Nha Be District, Thu Duc District, and Hoc Mon District.

The remaining blocks, wards, precincts, and districts are in the process of forming their own resistance clubs.

"Comrades in Ho Chi Minh City are always in the lead."

When they learned that resistance fighters in Ho Chi Minh City had formed a club of resistance there, people in neighboring provinces such as Dong Thap, Dong Nai, An Giang, Phu Khanh, and Thuan Hai sent people to inquire about their experiences in organizing things and carrying on activities and requested documents (statutes) so that they could make preparations to establish resistance clubs in their own province.

During a discussion, a comrade from Phu Khanh said: "We are very lucky to have Saigon. During the resistance against America, we watched Saigon. Whenever you launched a movement, we followed suit. The same is true today. Comrades from Ho Chi Minh City are always in the lead."

Forbidding the establishment of an association is a violation of the constitution.

In carrying on regular activities or activities to commemorate an historical event, almost all of the ward, precinct, district, and block clubs have told the Management Board of the Municipal Club of Resistance that a motion should be submitted to the Municipal People's Committee to form an association of resistance fighters to replace the clubs. Associations are political and social organizations, while clubs are units of a cultural and recreational nature.

During the struggle for national liberation, why weren't the resistance fighters allowed to organize resistance associations. Article 67 of the constitution of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam stipulates that [people] "are free to meet and establish associations." Thus, is this against the constitution?

During a trip to Phu Khanh, a number of people on the Management Board of the Ho Chi Minh City Club of Resistance had a chance to talk with the chairman of the provincial people's committee. The chairman said that "my wife asked me to meet with you and ask about your experiences in forming a resistance club, because that is in harmony with the wishes of veterans in Phu Khanh. I plan to establish a resistance club in Nha Trang first and then gradually establish others in the wards and districts. Eventually, we plan to establish a provincial association. To many elderly people, a club seems too informal." (The wife of this chairman is a cadre in the Phu Khanh provincial Fatherland Front.)

Special Issue of 23 September

Many people—readers—responded honestly to the Special Issue that the Municipal Club of Resistance published on 23 September. There were many accurate criticisms. There were both good points and bad points. But most places approved of and supported the Special

Issue. Many readers said that the Special Issue should have spoken out even more strongly and that it should have made suggestions along with making criticisms. They said that there should have been an arts and letters section and a cartoon page.

Because few copies were published, there were not enough to distribute copies to all those who wanted to read the Special Issue.

In response to a verbal order by higher echelons to stop publishing the Special Issue of the Municipal Club of Resistance, all 650 members of the club held a debate at the Precinct 3 meeting hall on 13 November 1988. Everyone agreed that the Special Issue of the Municipal Club of Resistance must continue to be published in accord with Article 67 of the constitution of the SRV on press freedom.

A Calm Debate

90A60056K Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 8

[Article by Cam Van]

[Text] In response to the invitation by the Club of Resistance, on 13 November 1988 more than 700 people from various elements attended a debate held at the Precinct 3 CPV Committee meeting hall.

Along with people 70-80 years old (one man was 91 years old) who had been in the party for 40-50 years and with veterans who had fought in two bloody wars of resistance, the debate was also attended by people of various religious faiths who have always had the interests of the country at heart, democratic bourgeois, industrialists who had supported the revolution even before liberation, intellectuals, representatives from the National Assembly, and overseas Chinese and Vietnamese who were on a visit here. Several generations of revolutionaries were present, packed in the meeting hall. Some were serious while others were quite merry. Many people came to the debate even though they knew that they would have to sit there the entire day. That was not easy given the present economic situation.

The target of the debate was to make suggestions to the party and look for reasons [for the failures] 2 years after the implementation of the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress. Responding to the appeal by the party, everyone was ready.

Opening the meeting on behalf of the management board, Nguyen Ho reported a few pieces of extraordinary information: The Standing Committee of the Municipal CPV Committee had informed him that the Central Committee had decided that TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN should not be allowed to publish any more issues, because there are already too many Vietnamese newspapers and the situation is very difficult and complex. It had also said that this debate should be

postponed. Several anonymous phone calls warned that the debate "could not be noisy."

The debate did not have to be "noisy," because the people who spoke here had the power of openness and a spirit of responsibility. What they said had the nature of profound criticism. Faced with the above tasks, those present were astonished by the idea that the Vietnamese press was too large at a time when the city, with a population of more than 4 million, had only one daily newspaper. Also, this idea was made at a time when there is an "information explosion" throughout the world and it is impossible to hide anything from the people because the "world is shrinking." Everyone present was opposed to the idea of closing down TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN. Everyone agreed that "TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN must continue to publish." Some raised the issue of people's rights based on the constitution. Others could not understand for whom the law on press freedom was intended for and why it was made. They couldn't understand why anyone would want to prevent a large and very loyal group such as former resistance fighters from publishing a newspaper. As a representative at the National Plenum of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union said: "Just a touch of democracy and we are already choking".

As for financial matters and the situation in implementing the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress, many people talked about taxes, the new bullies in the rural areas, half-way renovation, and civil affairs problems.

As for civil affairs, many of those at the debate agreed with Lt Gen Nam Long, who compared the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress to a "plan to build a palace." But the "builders are not skilled enough and cannot carry out the tasks called for in the plan." An old and experienced revolutionary, Tao Ty (La Kim Ly), said: "People made very serious mistakes in the price-wage-currency issue, but they continue to serve as secretaries of strategic economic committees. Many of those who think like bureaucrats and who favor a Stalinist-type economy still play a key role in the administration." Tran Cong Tuong said that "the thought scared us all."

With civil affairs and renovation in such a state, there can't be democracy, and new groups of bullies will arise, particularly in the rural areas. Pushed to the wall, some peasants were so angry that they came to the city and appealed to the Central Committee for help. According to Muoi Lua, recently, Le Ngoc Xuyen, a cadre at the Institute of Science and Technology, recently in broad day light, consoled some unhappy people who had supported him during the war. He went to inquire about them and gave them some tobacco. But he was arrested and jailed for one night (the night of 8-9 November 1988). Muoi Lua said that because the Precinct 1 CPV Committee intervened, Xuyen was released. She then asked: Who gave this order? Which level gave this order? Was this a violation of democratic rights?

Muoi Lua, Le Tan Duc, and many other people reflected on the tax situation. There are more and more taxes. Taxes are ruining production and hurting the laborers. In the final analysis, this is because civil affairs have not been renovated. Things are not in accord with the new tasks, and they still have a bureaucratic centralism and state subsidies nature. Many proposals were made to the central echelon. In particular, the National Assembly should use its right to dismiss people and dismiss those ministers, vice ministers, and people who have committed serious violations in formulating these terrible tax policies.

Those attending the debate agreed that the renovation line of the party and the resolution of the Sixth Party Congress were correct and in accord with the wishes of the people. But because civil affairs have not been renovated and because conservatives who enjoy special privileges have not been removed, obstacles have been encountered in implementing this resolution.

Statement by Nguyen Van Tran to Nguyen Ho

90A60056L Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG
KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 9

[Text] Dear Nguyen Ho:

Yesterday, you instructed me to prepare a statement. I agreed and suggested that it should be a short statement. The statement is as follows:

In the past, whenever the party faced a difficult problem, it immediately held a meeting. For example, during the Second Congress, President Ho allowed 23 cadres to hold a meeting to discuss the question of land during the resistance. I attended that meeting. When mistakes were made in carrying on land reform, President Ho invited cadres to attend a meeting. Giau was present. I still have my invitation.

When Ngo Dinh Diem refused to hold a "consultative conference," President Ho asked southern cadres to attend a meeting at No 6 Hoang Dieu Street. Vo Nguyen Giap chaired the meeting. I attended that meeting and expressed the following ideas:

The country has been divided in half. Each region has its own strategic tasks. Thus, we must organize two parties (in name) and two fronts.

At the end of the meeting, Vo Nguyen Giap embraced me. Today, on the anniversary of the founding of the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, I remember all this very well, and I have regrets. I wish the reunification of the country was discussed broadly. As we all know, our country has been reunified three times, by Nguyen Hua, Gia Long, and Truong Chinh. My advice was, don't rush. But I didn't have a chance to speak out. All I could do was appeal to heaven. I won't speak out any more, because it's useless. With this statement, I say I miss the red and green flag [flag of the NLF]. I feel sorry for the south.

Conscience and Loyalty

90A60056M Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG
KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 9

[Text] The Sixth Vietnam Trade Union Congress—the renovation struggle congress—which was held in Hanoi during the period 17-20 October 1988, was a very very successful congress. At the congress, Nguyen Ho, the first vice president of the Vietnam Confederation of Trade Unions, who is now retired, with the credentials of a congress delegate, gave the following speech to the delegates assembled there:

"After victory was won in the spring of 1975 (4 April), the entire south was liberated, the country was reunified, and the entire country entered a new revolutionary stage, the socialist stage.

"After that, on all of Vietnam's documents was the title "Socialist Republic of Vietnam—Independence, Freedom, and Happiness." But after 13 years of socialist construction, our country is still not a socialist country. Vietnam is one of the poorest and most backward countries in the world. It will be a long time before we become a socialist country. We are independent, but we are not free or happy.

"In many provinces, the peasants have frequently held demonstrations. They have had to struggle against the new hoodlums who are oppressing them and stealing their land. There have been serious famines, with some people dying of starvation.

"During this same period of time, elsewhere in Southeast Asia, four economically powerful dragons have appeared: Thailand, South Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan. Using its economic strength, South Korea successfully organized the Seoul Olympics. The Olympic games there were a manifestation of South Korea's high level of economic and scientific and technical development and its organizational capabilities. A poor country such as Vietnam cannot hold an olympics. It will be a long time before our turn comes.

"The Vietnamese people are brave, intelligent, creative, and diligent. Through 40 years of war filled with sacrifices and hardships, our people fought powerful enemy invaders—the Japanese fascists, the French imperialists, and the Americans aggressors—and won independence and freedom and respect for the fatherland. But we have not been able to turn the country into an economically powerful dragon, a prosperous and happy dragon in Southeast Asia. What is the reason for this? We must get to the bottom of this.

"The party established a dictatorship of the proletariat in order to serve the interests of the workers and laborers and improve their lives. But the dictatorship of the proletariat has repeatedly attacked the workers and laborers (both manual and intellectual laborers) and delivered knockout blows, such as changing the currency, implementing a minimum wage, and issuing 100,

200, 1,000, 2,000, and 5,000 dong banknotes. Inflation has skyrocketed, and taxes on commodities and on imports and exports have been raised. There have been 3-month periods when people have not been paid their wages or issued rice. The wages paid can support one person for only 5-7 days. The wage system has not changed since 1960. In other countries, if prices increase 7-10 percent, the premier is forced to step down. But in our country, besides not being dismissed, he is even promoted.

"Why has the dictatorship of the proletariat generated such terrible effects for the labors? It's very difficult to understand.

"We often criticize the working class for being depraved, forgetting that it is the party and proletarian state that has corrupted the working class. Workers have had to leave the factories to engage in trading, drive pedicabs, sell lottery tickets, repair bicycles, till fields and engage in slash-burn agriculture, and work as hired workmen. For a very long time, the state carried on a very bad wage policy that did not provide the laborers and their families with a minimum standard of living, manifest social fairness, or stimulate productive labor.

"The workers and laborers and their families had to eat and provide for themselves. Because they could not earn enough at the enterprises to support themselves, they had to leave the enterprises in order to make a living. That is the cause of the corruption.

"During the national democratic revolution, the peasants were the main force. They made the decisive contribution to the victory of national liberation.

"In the past, communists always took the lead in demonstrations by peasants struggling for their interests. But today, now that the party is in power—the dictatorship of the proletariat—the peasants must struggle to protect their interests concerning land and democracy and oppose oppression. No longer are leading communists in the ranks of the demonstrators.

"Clearly, after it seized power, the party drew away from the masses and from the workers and laborers. It turned away from its roots. As a result, the party no longer has anything to rely on. It no longer has the strength to carry out its highest revolution—socialism and communism.

"In order to correct these basic mistakes, the party must change direction, and with a Bolshevik spirit, quickly return to its roots—the workers and laborers.

"Besides the problems discussed above, I have the feeling that the party fears democracy and openness. In my view, the party has nothing to fear. With a voluntaristic spirit and its high level of awareness, the party should launch a powerful democratization and openness movement throughout the country. This will attract millions of people to the struggle to renovate every aspect of our country and society. By doing this, the party will show that it is resolved to carry on renovation.

And this will create the conditions to bring our country out of its long period of poverty and backwardness.

"Finally, the Council of Ministers must take steps to ensure that the cadres, workers, and civil servants are paid their wages and issued their rice on time. The Council of Ministers should immediately promulgate a rational wage policy for cadres, workers, and civil servants throughout the country."

After the delegates from here and abroad had made their speeches, on the afternoon of 19 October 1988, Do Muoi, the chairman of the Council of Ministers, addressed the delegates for approximately 2 hours, without relying on any notes. People throughout the country listened to this speech on radio. The following themes should be given attention:

After recognizing and evaluating the role of the Vietnamese working class in resisting the French and the Americans, building and defending the fatherland, undergoing terrible hardships, exhibiting great heroism, and making great sacrifices and after evaluating the country's economic and social situation and the living conditions of the laborers in general in the past 13 years, the chairman of the Council of Ministers stated: "The party and state are very distressed whenever they can't provide food for the workers and civil servants. We realize that we have many shortcomings in dealing with cadres, workers, and civil servants. These shortcomings are quite clear. Your criticisms are valid. I have served in the government for 30 years. For 20 of those years I served as deputy premier. Why has the dictatorship of the proletariat allowed workers to starve? Why have some people been allowed to grow rich? Is this a dictatorship of the proletariat or a dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? I feel heart-sick listening to your criticisms. Injustice is wrong. The Council of Ministers bears complete responsibility. We won't try to avoid taking responsibility. I also know my responsibility. You can blame me. You can shoot me for this. I will voluntarily accept discipline—self-conscious discipline."

As for the four dragons in Southeast Asia, Do Muoi said: "We should not compare ourselves with those four dragons, because if Vietnam becomes a dragon, we will have to lower the banner of Marxism-Leninism. The United States has had military bases in Thailand and South Korea and given aid to these countries."

Because the Sixth Vietnamese Trade Union Congress did not set aside any time to hold a dialogue, the matter of the four dragons is still an issue. Each side has its own ideas about this. However, within the narrow framework of this special issue, this issue needs to be discussed a little.

Everyone realizes that Vietnam has been the only anti-aggression dragon in the world in the 20th Century. Everyone admits this.

But during the past 13 years (1975-1988), Vietnam has sat helplessly on the ground, unable to turn itself into a

prosperous, progressive, and happy dragon. After 30 April 1975, there were no longer any American military bases in Vietnam, and the Soviet Union and other socialist countries provided aid and support. The communist party and the banner of Marxism-Leninism were still there. But for some reason, Vietnam was not able to develop and became one of the poorest and most backward countries in the world. As a result, people feel that the banner of Marxism-Leninism has been lowered and that the role of the communist party has declined, not as a result of outside pressure but by what Vietnam itself has done.

The United States established military bases in Thailand and South Korea, which established their domination over those two countries, even though it did provide non-military aid. Thus, to develop their countries, the peoples of these two countries have had to overcome countless difficulties and obstacles. In the end, they turned their countries into prosperous and advanced dragons.

We must be objective and take an honest look at the realities in neighboring countries in order to learn lessons useful to our nation. We should not be proud or conservative. Because if we are, it will be a long time before Vietnam can raise its head.

As for the speech by Nguyen Ho, NHAN DAN has not yet published the contents mentioned above but has only given a general summary. It stated that the "speech was not profound or specific." Perhaps it had its own, although invalid, reasons for saying this about this speech, which produced a resounding effect at the Sixth Vietnamese Trade Union Congress and in the capital, Hanoi.

Obviously, bearing news pleasing to high-echelon leaders is easier than honestly reporting the profoundly critical speech of an ordinary delegate at a congress. But it's unfortunate that this was the party's newspaper!

Congress of Intelligence and Responsibility

90A60056N Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG
KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 10

[Article by Nam Thanh]

[Text] The Third Congress of the Vietnamese Fatherland Front was held in Hanoi during the period 2-4 November 1988 under the slogan "Solidarity and Renovation." However, the foreign delegations named this congress the "Congress of Intelligence and Responsibility." I couldn't help showing off by using this phrase as the title of this article.

But I can't help worrying about that, because I don't know if I am worthy of such praise. In talking about intelligence, we must also talk about creativity. And so, what did the congress create? In talking about responsibility, there must be power. What authority does the Front have to handle this or that task?

At the congress, people gave and listened to speeches. Is talking and listening to the truth and increasing one's understanding about the country's situation a manifestation of one's intelligence and spirit of responsibility?

What type of socialism is this?

The congress welcomed delegations from 14 fraternal countries. The ranking delegation leader was Phoumi Vongvichit, the acting president of the Council of State and the president of the Lao Front for National Construction. The delegation that traveled the farthest and that had to overcome the most difficulties to attend the congress was the delegation from Nicaragua, which is at war. All 14 delegations presented papers at the congress.

All 14 delegations attending the congress brought with them a wealth of experience in national and socialist construction. They provided us with new perspectives and made valuable contributions to finding the path of renovation. Conversely, they also learned many useful things from us.

If the various countries, which are all different, emulate to perfect socialism, the results will be beneficial to the people in each country and the entire world, unlike in the past when people "felt the socialist elephant" and criticized each other for not "feeling" the same thing. There are people who know absolutely nothing about Yugoslav socialism and people who do not even know where Yugoslavia is who want others to follow the Yugoslav path. Similarly, there are people who do not know the difference between "landlords" and "landowners" or between today's commodity production and management peasants and our ancestors but who loudly criticize the spirit of the peasants.

Although Vietnamese peasants are ignorant of many things, they have a much better "feel" for "many socialisms" and have affirmed true socialism better than many dogmas and manifestations of sclerosis.

We can't stop halfway up the elevator.

If the peoples of the fraternal countries are alike in aspiring to greater happiness and greater achievements in life and for life, in short, "more of socialism," they also have the same worries, with the greatest worry being renovating the way people look at, think about, and go about building socialism.

Be careful! "People can't stop halfway up the elevator. A woman can't be half pregnant." Is that the most persuasive appeal that can be made concerning half-way renovation? That is the statement that the leader of the Polish delegation made at the congress and that was warmly applauded by the congress.

If the country is being divided in a world that is half-way up the elevator and a "half-white, half-black" freak is thrashing about on the ground in torment, don't people know that they must arouse those who are intentionally pulling the country in the wrong direction? If not, that

will just put an even greater burden on our children and future generations. Or is it because people have gotten used to using subjective and arbitrary laws instead of natural laws? Have people ignored the law? But those who are ignorant of poetry cannot be ignorant of public opinion.

Reporting and Telling Lies

In the old Saigon, there was the saying "reporting lies is very profitable."

Everyone knows that that this is wrong. In the past, only the bureaucrats, thugs, and evil people were referred to as publishers of "lies." That is, they spoke insolently and did not "stay within the framework of the law." They did things at their own convenience. In the past, our country's press circles had many people who dared to "touch the tiger's beard" without fear of being bitten.

Understanding things this way, it is easy to see that recently, "profits" have been much greater than before, and readers have greater trust in what they read because the writers dare to "talk recklessly." Recently, because people have "dared to talk recklessly," that is, because they have refused to stay within the arbitrary framework allowed, we have had speeches such as that given by the leader of Poland's delegation, which was printed in the press. As for how to "talk recklessly," ask people at SAIGON GIAI PHONG and TUOI TRE.

Good harvests and bad harvests:

Fourteen of the 40 speeches made by Vietnamese and foreign delegates were prepared ahead of time. The time was very limited and so the number of delegates who could make speeches was limited. Unfortunately, there was not time for the "freedom platform" topic. Those who organize future conferences must do things more scientifically, democratically, and resolutely in arranging and balancing the time.

Of the 14 papers read, 6 were given by people from Ho Chi Minh City. If the Vietnamese delegate who lives abroad and who has relatives living in Ho Chi Minh City is counted, that makes a total of seven, or 50 percent. If we add the speeches made by peasant and minority group delegates from the Central Highlands, Kien Giang, and Song Be, 11 of the 14 speeches were given by delegates from the south. The rest were given by delegates from the central echelon. There was no time for delegates from Hanoi or the northern and central regions to present papers.

Some people joked that the south and Ho Chi Minh City had a good harvest while the north and Hanoi had a bad harvest. Some people with responsibility said that the congress did not make any distinction between localities and that the congress emphasized the pressing problems of the country.

When the entire country knows:

Not unexpectedly, the northern and central provinces gave up their legitimate right to speak in order to listen

to Ho Chi Minh City and the south. That was the concept of the entire country regarding the situation of the place "in greatest danger." That was a manifestation of the spirit of responsibility of the entire country regarding the nation's path forward.

Once the most important problems of the country were seen and once the country had correctly evaluated the situation and formulated a correct concept of its responsibility to the future, a course of action began to take shape and the country began to move. Our guests correctly evaluated the importance of the congress. They called this a "spirit of responsibility" congress. And doesn't having a spirit of responsibility mean being intelligent?

She could serve as minister:

One of those who read a paper was Nguyen Thi Nu, the director of the Duc Tan Patterned Tile Company. Her ideas were very grand and quite attractive. While presenting her speech, she paused, looked around the room, and, with a smile, said loudly: "I don't know if what I will say will offend anyone." She then calmly addressed the issue that she thought might offend people. As when she restated the statement made by a colleague. "In the past, the bourgeois joining joint state-private enterprises with the state was like a prisoner of war with light detention being released." Or when she slowly said: "We think that to renovate things quickly and effectively, we must begin at the central echelon and renovate from the top down. Renovation must begin with politics if we want to renovate the economy. If we keep the existing political forces and conservative minds, renovation will be limited, or it will not be able to achieve anything."

After listening to this speech, one old and experienced comrade turned and said to the comrade sitting next to him: "She could serve as minister." When this was recounted, the municipal delegation laughed. Its a shame that that comrade isn't able to put forth the standards for selecting people with real capabilities who will do things based on the actual situation and who will take responsibility for changing the actual situation.

Our country is filled with heroes. The only thing is that they have not always been recognized. Anyone who works for the majority and who makes sacrifices for the common interest is a hero. Stated that way, our country may collide with the minister if the minister does not allow things to be discussed, if things stand still, and if the people are not allowed to participate in the discussion.

What happened to the speech?

The representative for the Peasants' Association was Nguyen Thanh Tho. His paper solemnly recalled the powerful words of millions of peasants and could have brought utter stillness to the hall.

Unfortunately, his speech, which was straightforward and which was filled with a spirit of responsibility, did not reach the ears of the delegates or the press. If you want to know the contents, ask Muoi Tho, if he still

remembers. And if you don't want to do that, wait until the peasants flock to Saigon and ask them.

The Viet Duc boys had a representative at the congress:

That was Professor Ngo Gia Hy, the representative for medical circles, surgeons, and the Viet Duc boys. Those attending the congress were very interested in the proposals that he made concerning using the intelligentsia and organizing and training the medical sector.

After that, the chairman of the council of ministers invited the professor to eat with him so that he could talk with him at greater length. As a result, the professor had to postpone his flight back. I hope that his proposals do not have the same fate as a short-lived meal or remain proposals on paper.

Quick meals and crisis

Besides holding meetings and taking votes, those attending the congress naturally had time to eat, sleep, and chat.

Most of the delegates at this congress stayed at the Giang Vo "Hotel," because this was convenient for "organizing" things. During the past 10 years, this "hotel" has had its "ups and downs." There have also been crises.

The foreign delegates stayed by themselves, as did the overseas Vietnamese. The delegates from within the country stayed here and so every "crisis" was convenient. Things were, however, somewhat inconvenient for those who lived around there because of the way people conducted themselves. And things were somewhat inconvenient for those who had no need to go to the airport at 0400 hours, even though people spoke hastily. I hope that in 5 years, the amount of time that Seoul had to spend to prepare for the olympic games, when it is time to hold the Fourth Congress, people will want to catch up to the four dragons, people will again want to come here, including foreign visitors and overseas Vietnamese, in order to dissect our "hurried renovation" and see what has happened.

Even though the quick meals mentioned above were unappetizing and injurious to health, it had nothing to do with the crisis.

It is fortunate that the Congress had a difficult time at the beginning but the ending was successful. At first we thought we had nobody to chair the meeting which caused many delegates to worry. Finally, a chairman who had the trust of everybody was elected. This type of crisis is just a growing pain. Once it's over, the organization will be more experienced to fulfill its tasks in the new era.

With this encouragement, the lawyer chairman concluded the Congress to start a new era of working among the people.

Poem by Rum Bao Viet

90A60056O Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 13

[Text]

When?

The mother came from the countryside and,
Seeing her son, called his name
—Sau, is that you?
Mother and son were very happy.
Sitting on the sidewalk
Listening to the mother speak so lovingly
Why was her life so difficult?
"They took my fields
"Changed for bad and remote fields,
"When I expressed my feelings, they shouted and said
'Are you against cooperation?'
"When I strongly protested
"They tied me up and put me in prison
"I stayed there for a month
"I was 'in a Viet Cong prison'
"Things are very difficult these days and
"Completely different from before
"It's bad from top to bottom."
A crowd started to gather
Mother rushed away
Along the uneven street,
Turned down Le Duan Street
The mother did not involve her child
The child felt the pain inside
Because the mother did not blame him
He felt even greater pain
The villains were causing troubles
To mother and the people
They used the name of Communism!
Their right cause was not right
Their bad faith winning
It's the people who suffer at all times!
Loving mother dearly
I appealed to the Central Committee for her
She still remembered
Still had faith in the party
Arriving at the center
The mother remembered
And still had love for and trust in the party
When will the righteous win and the evil be defeated?
When? When?

Letter to the Editor of TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN

90A60056P Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 14

[Letter from an Overseas Vietnamese]

[Text] I live far from my native homeland. I have a comfortable life materially, but I am always thinking about the country where I was born and raised.

I regularly follow the situation in Vietnam through the press and in the news that comes from Vietnam and other countries as conditions permit. Every step forward, no matter how small, excites me and makes me proud. On the other hand, the negative aspects, especially the difficulties that the Vietnamese people have created for themselves, make me very apprehensive.

During this visit home, I was fortunate to be able to read the Special Issue of 28 September and *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* published by the "Club of Resistance." I was very moved by your work. My heart goes out to elderly revolutionaries who should now be resting after struggling for so long to win peace and freedom for the nation and who must, in the final years of their life, continue to struggle for happiness and justice and for all those wonderful things that are still just ideas on paper and that do not yet exist in reality.

Please allow me to express my feelings in the hope that your sacred revolutionary feelings will strengthen the wonderful traditions of the Vietnamese people and help guide the younger generation to the final goal. I wish all of you much happiness.

Letter to the Editor in Chief of *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*

90A60056Q Ho Chi Minh City *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 89 p 14

[Letter by Nguyen Dac Xuan, secretary general of the Hue Arts and Letters Association]

[Text] Hue Municipal Arts and Letters Association

Hue, 25 November 1988 No 4 Hoang Hoa Than, Hue
DT: 2599

To Nguyen Ho, the editor in chief of *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*

I would like to thank you for sending us copies of *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*. We have sent them to a number of leading comrades in the province and city, a number of intellectuals, veterans, and writers and artists. In general, people welcome this. Many people who have heard about this have come to the association to read this paper. The Hue radio station has read a number of articles. Once again, on behalf of readers in Hue, I would like to thank you and your people for serving as the voice of these resistance fighters.

In response to *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*, the Arts and Letters Association would like to promise you the following:

1. We will agree to distribute 100 copies at the printed price.
2. We will write articles needed by *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*.

3. We will gather ideas from readers.

With the credentials of a resistance writer and the secretary general of the Hue Arts and Letters Association, I would like to make a few observations after reading the first issue of *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN*.

a. *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* has looked at the truth and dared to speak the truth. In the past, your frank way of talking could be heard only at lectures and debates. This is the first time that such statements have been made in a newspaper. Those people who want real renovation and who are distressed by the country's fate are very happy about this. But some people's minds have hardened and their revolutionary concepts are set in concrete. When these people read your paper, they will be shocked.

b. We are carrying on renovation. That is, we are replacing the old with the new. There are two sides to renovation. One is to know what is old and backward in order to eliminate it. *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* has seen what is old and bad and which, therefore, needs to be eliminated. The masses are waiting for proposals on what to renovate. In each issue, new things and solutions to the problems must be presented. That is the only way to balance things and keep readers from losing their balance.

c. The masses can criticize everything that is old. But veterans cannot talk like that, because we are both the culprit and the victim. We are the victim of ourselves. I suggest that *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* publish serious review articles. If there weren't so many negative phenomena today, few of us would be raising our hands. It would not be fair if we mentioned only those in positions of power. Future generations would laugh at us for seeing the bad in others while ignoring the bad in ourselves. Those writers who have published books and other works that have contributed to state subsidies thinking, dogmatism, the lack of democracy, and backwardness must be reviewed, too.

The self-criticisms that you have made will force those in positions of power to make self-criticisms. As a result of this self-criticism (if they refuse to do this, the press will force them to do so), they will realize that if they are not worthy of carrying out renovation, they will have to withdraw. Veterans know how to make self-criticism. They know how to accept criticism and can put forth the renovation path. Those are perfect people, the ideal of today's society.

I don't have much experience in publishing a newspaper, and I live in a small province. Thus, I am sure that many of my ideas are quite superficial. If I have said anything wrong, I hope you will be understanding.

We hope that the Hue Arts and Letters Association and *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* can cooperate well.

I wish you and *TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN* success.

Letter to TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN

90A60056R Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 14

[Letter by Nguyen Ba, writer]

[Text] Can Tho, 6 December 1988

One morning at the beginning of the month in Can Tho City, we heard about the publication of TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (the voice of the Saigon-Gia Dinh resistance veterans). Everyone was very excited. Because the country is facing great difficulties, and only brave and loyal people such as you (whom we have known about and respected for a long time) can publish frank and honest voices.

When we received our copy of the Special Issue of 23 September, the quality of the articles brought a bright revolutionary flame to our hearts and enabled us to see things more clearly. We saw a real direction for renovation in which we could play a role and make contributions. The most important thing is that TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN clarified and confirmed the things that we had been thinking about and discussing (each place has been carrying on a struggle to uphold the truth). That strength encouraged us and nothing can defeat it. It's clear that TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN is for people everywhere who hunger for real independence and freedom. We are in complete agreement with our comrades in the Saigon-Gia Dinh zone.

We went to the Can Tho City Intellectuals Club and purchased several dozen copies of TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN. We gave copies to veteran revolutionaries (who had joined the party in 1936) and who had fought the French and Americans and been imprisoned at Con Non, Ba Ra, and Chi Hoa with you today, the supreme leader of the party. TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN is a high-quality publication. It is everything that we had hoped for.

These veteran revolutionaries suggest that you immediately send each person several dozen copies of the 23 September Special Issue so that they can distribute them to those who share the same viewpoint.

We have sent copies of TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN to the editors of papers that have scored achievements in opposing negative phenomena and to those in charge of radio stations in order to provide them with new items for their programs.

We are truly delighted that you have created a forum for a great cause.

Letter to TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN

90A60056S Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 14

[Letter by Dung Tien, Vinh Binh Cho Lach Village, Ben Tre]

[Text] It was not until today, 19 November 1988, that is about 2 months after it was published, that we were able to read the 23 September special issue of TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN. By the time we received it, the paper was in tatters because it had been read by so many people.

What was our initial reaction? We were astonished. I would like to be frank.

We are a small circle of friends in a district far from the city, a district that can be called the "finger" of "Khot-ta-bit" province, which Tran Bach Dang once recalled. Life is very simple here, not much to do. All we do is read the newspaper, listen to the radio, and chat with each other.

One member of the group listened to a speech by Tran Van Giau on the municipal radio the other night. He was so happy that he rushed more than 10 km to tell his friends.

At times, we tell things to each other like this:

Saigon is a very strange city nowadays. Anybody can do any research and his name will last for generations. It doesn't have to be a great research. Just list the names of those who have retired and are living there, or write about "The Three Mr. Tran" - that's enough to be recognized.

Why am I talking about this?

My friends and I just want to introduce ourselves and express our feelings. At the same time, we want to tell you that we are so delighted and we very much appreciate your newspaper.

I would like to suggest several things:

1. In the article "Why Has TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN Appeared?" and in the articles by Tran Van Giau and Tran Bach Dang, it was said that the tradition of resistance [truyen thong khang chien] is a valuable asset that the people have had throughout our long history of building and defending the country. However, this was not stressed, and this could easily result in readers thinking that this is a newspaper for those in Saigon and Gia Dinh who participated in the resistance against France and the United States. Thus, people may think that the tradition of resistance began just recently. The newspaper seemed to stress that this began during the period of resistance against France and America.

The line of the newspaper should stress that the tradition of resistance is as long as the nation's history. This is in

the blood of every Vietnamese. I did not fight the Chinese Nguyen or Thanh, but because I am a part of this tradition, I fought against the French and I am considered to be a "resistance fighter." In the present historical stage, I am no longer fighting the French or Americans. But I am participating in the "struggle against conservatism, sluggishness, bureaucratic centralism, authoritarianism, oppression, opportunism, and toadism. Thus, I must be viewed as a "resistance fighter."

2. The Saigon-Gia Dinh zone is the leader of Nam Bo, and at one level, when you speak of Saigon-Gia Dinh, you are speaking about the entire south. Saying that I am fighting in Ben Tre means that I am fighting in Saigon-Gia Dinh too.

Based on the above, we propose:

1. "We" live in the province, but "we" are "Saigon-Gia Dinh fighters." We have a right to express views in our organ and cannot be limited just to "providing ardent support and contributing ideas." We want TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN to be the "voice of people who are deeply interested in the future of the country and who will provide support in the country's present situation." We know that you have your own troubles (among which is the danger that "resistance fighters" will be crushed). But we want to share those troubles.

2. The newspaper should print more copies in a more attractive format. With contents like that of the first issue and a price of 500-1,000 dong, people will buy it.

I have many other ideas and suggestions, but I would like to be frank. I am afraid that the newspaper will "die an early death." I hope that our newspaper will continue to publish for a long time to come. Until you hear from me again, I have a question: How can I subscribe to the newspaper?

Whose Country?

90A60056T Ho Chi Minh City TRUYEN THONG KHANG CHIEN (Special Issue) in Vietnamese
Dec 88 p 16

[Article by Yet Chan Tron]

[Text] "Live and work in accord with the constitution and the laws." That is a correct and democratic slogan. There cannot be democracy without a constitution, because the constitution is the basic law that expresses the ownership rights of the people. It has been created by the people and their representatives. The emperors had laws. Every system has laws. But the laws of the emperors were based on the will of one person. Democratic laws, however, are based on the will of the people, on the basic law approved by the people, that is, the constitution.

Our constitution stipulates the basic rights and obligations of citizens. Everyone, without exception, must respect these rights and carry out these obligations.

Article 67 of the constitution states: "Citizens have freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of

assembly, freedom to form associations, and freedom to demonstrate in accord with the interests of socialism and the people."

Thus, holding meetings, establishing associations, and publishing newspapers are basic rights of citizens. These are rights guaranteed by the constitution.

Article 55 of the constitution states: "Every citizen is equal before the law."

Thus, all citizens enjoy the same rights and have the same obligations. Special privileges cannot be given to certain people and not to others.

Article 56 of the constitution states: Citizens have the right to participate in managing the affairs of the state and of society."

Thus, when citizens exercise their rights, they are actually exercising a greater right, the right to participate in the affairs of the country. The heart of the democratic system is to allow every citizen to participate in the affairs of the country and not to allow just one person or a small group of people to rule the country.

Veterans who shed their blood in the struggle to win independence and freedom for the country and people have the right and obligation to participate in helping the people to prosper and the country to grow stronger by exercising the fundamental rights granted by the constitution.

Having fought in the two terrible resistances and having served as the hands of the party throughout the national struggle, more than anyone else, resistance fighters have a responsibility with respect to the existence and extinction of the nation.

They have formed an association and published a newspaper, which is in accord with the constitution, in order to fulfill these responsibilities and to continue serving as guardsmen for the party among the people. But for some reason they have been forbidden to establish an association or publish a newspaper!

The loyal voice of the people and the lawful aspirations of the people are a great source of inspiration for the party, and an alert to those responsible for state affairs, a priceless lesson for history. Only those who deny their heritage would ignore this lesson.

"Live and work in accord with the constitution and the laws." That is applicable not only to the people but also to the state—particularly to the state.

Article 67 of the constitution states: "The state must create the material conditions necessary to enable the people to exercise their rights," meaning the basic freedoms stated in the constitution.

If a state that fails to create the conditions necessary to enable the people to exercise their basic rights and obstructs them when they try to exercise their legitimate rights, is that state a democratic state?

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